

VA**U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs**

News Release

Office of Public Affairs
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Washington, D.C. -- The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is announcing that the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival will take place in La Crosse, Wis., Nov. 3-10. The annual event is co-sponsored by VA and Help Hospitalized Veterans, with support from The Recording Industries Music Performance Trust Fund.

The festival, hosted this year by the VA Medical Center in Tomah, Wis., culminates a year-long fine arts talent competition open to all veterans receiving medical treatment at VA medical centers nationwide. More than 80 veterans, who were selected as national winners in music, dance, drama and art competitions, will arrive in La Crosse Nov. 3 for a week of rehearsals and workshops. On Sun., Nov. 9, at 2 p.m., the music, drama and dance winners will stage a gala variety show backed by a professional orchestra at the Viterbo College Fine Arts Center. Artists will exhibit their work in the Center's lobby. Dr. Joyce Brothers will be master of ceremonies for the festival.

"In VA medical centers across the country, we have learned that real healing doesn't always mean taking care of just the physical needs of a patient; it often requires treating the 'whole' person," said Secretary-Designate of Veterans Affairs Hershel W. Gober. "VA's patients benefit significantly from the role creative arts therapy plays in their recovery and rehabilitation."

The public is invited to attend the gala performance and art show. Admission is free, but tickets are required. For ticket information, call (608) 372-1262.

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